

FROM:



PROSCIUTTO
LA QUERCIA

PROSCIUTTO
DI PARMA

PROSCIUTTO
DI SAN DANIELE

Meat Antipasti

These are the delectable salumi we serve as antipasti. It's best to choose several different types to create a varied platter. I like a spiced salami as the core of the plate, along with a whole muscle like coppa or prosciutto and a fatter one like lardo or pancetta.

PROSCIUTTO CRUDO DOLCE is the general term for an air-dried salt-cured ham made from pigs that weigh in at around 350 pounds. The hams are generally hung, after a traditional salting process, for at least 300 days, often for up to 24 or 36 months. The apparent appreciation for jamón Jabugo de Bellota, also called jamón ibérico, in Spain and now in the world "luxury goods market" has Italian prosciutto makers rethinking the potential for flavor development, and older and older hams will be on the market from each of the following as this new style develops. The best way to understand the differences is to go to a place that allows and promotes sampling and taste your options. Then go with what you love—simple and easy.

These three varieties are our favorites: **PROSCIUTTO DI PARMA** is from Emilia-Romagna's Langhirano, between the Taro and the Baganza Rivers, near Parma. This

ham is the king. The pigs are often fed the whey left from Parmigiano-Reggiano production, and we love the 18-month versions made by Galoni and Greci e Folzani. **PROSCIUTTO DI SAN DANIELE** is slightly sweeter than the Parma hams, in our opinion—because of the cooler ambient temperatures, a little less salt is used. These come from the San Daniele and Sauris regions of Friuli, and we love Fratelli Beretta and Principe. **PROSCIUTTO LA QUERCIA**, made by our friends Herb and Kathy Eckhouse in Iowa, is the best American prosciutto on the market. It is fragrant and more pork roasty than either of the Italian versions above. We love both their Green Label and their Rossa; their website is www.laquercia.us.

There are also hams called **PROSCIUTTI CRUDI SALATI** produced throughout regions farther south in Italy, including Toscana, Umbria, and Le Marche. These are more heavily salted and often have pepper and herbs such as rosemary or bay leaves and garlic.

Perhaps the most royal of all ham products is **CULATELLO**, made in the Bassa Parmense and Bassa Verdiana regions near Zibello in northern Emilia-Romagna. It was developed in these higher-humidity, lower-altitude